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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.













# AN ORATION,

DELIVERED AT THE

*Baptist Meeting-House in COLEBROOK, (Conn.)*

On the National Thanksgiving.

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BY HENRY BLISS.

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*"The name of AMERICAN, which belongs to you in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism."*

WASHINGTON.

PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF THE HEARERS.

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FELLOW-CITIZENS,

**B**Y the Proclamation of the President of the United States, we are this day called to mingle our heartfelt emotions of gratitude and praise to the Almighty disposer of events, for the glorious and honorable termination of the war, and the auspicious return of peace to our beloved country. On this occasion, while we recognize the arm of Jehovah, which in the eyes of all the nations has again been made bare in our behalf; while we bow with grateful reverence in the temple of America's God, to join in the national chorus of joy and indulge the pride of American feeling, I trust will not be counted criminal.

THE love of our country is a principle so strongly mingled with the affections of the human heart, that it becomes a matter of extreme difficulty for men to eradicate its inborn impressions; it may, for a while, be smothered by the hand of despotism, or be made to mistake its

object by the intriguing arts of faction, but the sacred flame can never be extinguished ; it is the gift of God ; the immortal fire kindled by the hand of an indulgent Creator, to become an active principle in the more private walks of life, or to glow in the national counsels, and blaze out in glorious deeds in the crimson fields of war, for the preservation of those rights and liberties so dear to man.

It is this which has inspired the Orator's eloquence, the Statesman's study, and the Poet's song throughout all ages ! it is this which, independent of the wish for the honors or emoluments of offices and distinctions, ought to actuate every virtuous and noble mind ; for to feel our country's wrongs, to mourn over its calamities, and to rejoice in its prosperity and happiness, are duties enjoined upon us by the common claims of society, as well as by the more interested feelings of our nature. And if ever there was a time since the establishment of our national existence, when the friends of their country had real cause to rejoice, that time is now.

BUT before I proceed to that part of my subject, let me turn back your attention, for a few moments, to years and seasons past, when the protecting care of Heaven over our favored land was, as it has been now, in various instances, so visibly manifested.

In the more unenlightened ages, when it was deemed criminal for men to worship the Deity contrary to the laws of the state, our forefathers had been cruelly treated at home for the rights of conscience, and had left their country for a refuge and an asylum in the lonely wilds of North-America—they were the children in the woods, fed by the indulgent hand of Heaven, and protected from danger and death, which menaced them in various forms ; from perils on the ocean and on the land ; from famine and from the rage of wild beasts and the murderous vengeance of more ferocious men. But they flourished, they multiplied, and their descendants soon spread over extensive colonies, where their industry and enterprize smoothed the rough and rugged scenes of nature, and made “ the wilderness to rejoice and to blossom like the rose.”—Thus, bating the delirium of their superstitious notions and the transient wild-fire of their bigotry, they made rapid improvements, and were a virtuous and happy peo-



ple until the galling oppressions of their exactors and task-masters from England compelled them at last to recognize their in-born rights, and to rouse into action the waking energies of an injured and insulted nation. Almost destitute of every requisite for defence against the powerful fleets and armies of Great-Britain, and opposed by internal enemies, no doubt many in this respectable assembly well remember the distressing scenes, the clouds of fearful darkness which so often overspread the land during that arduous struggle for Liberty and Independence. But you did not despair ; you felt that your all was at stake ; you felt *that you had a country !* even when you were without a Government and without Laws. Your country called ; its mandate was sacred ; you rallied to its standard ; you fought with various success ; for years you toiled through scenes of peril and through fields of blood, while the dubious scale of war hung trembling with the fate of unborn millions !—But you finally conquered ; you compelled the government of Great-Britain to acknowledge your Independence ; you beheld the giant humbled at the feet of the stripling ! you established a national government and a national character, and while you received the plaudits of an admiring world, you heard it proclaimed aloud throughout the land, and you no doubt felt the truth of that important declaration, that the God of Armies was on your side ! that with a strong arm and a mighty hand He had enabled you to overcome your enemies ; that He had conducted America through the dubious conflict, and given her a name and a high rank among the nations of the earth.

Nor less was the Divine indulgence manifested to us as a nation, when for a long season of uninterrupted prosperity, and for more than thirty years of peace, a peace scarce broken by the trumpet's sound, or disturbed by the meteor flashes of war, while Europe was shaken to its centre by perpetual contests and commotions, and the two rival powers were seeking to embroil us in their conflicts ; under the guardian care of Heaven we made a rapid progress in agricultural improvements, in the arts and in manufactures—the sciences were cultivated—we increased in wealth—our trade flourished, our sails were on every sea, and our flag fluttered in every commercial port. But here I am reluctantly compelled to point you to the darker shades of the picture !—We had grown too proud and too

much attached to the luxurious habits and fashions of Europeans—we had too far departed from that dignified plainness of Republicans, and in the pride for distinction and the scramble for office, too many had departed from the faith in our Republican institutions—as a nation our pride and avarice had grown with our prosperity—we had run into the follies of foreigners, and had adopted too many of their vices, and we deserved punishment.

ENGLAND, whose vast maritime strength had increased her arrogance, by an avaricious lust of wealth unrestricted by the laws of nations or of national honor, had long been seeking to monopolize the trade of the world; she watched with a jealous eye our flourishing commerce; she remembered the days of her humbled pride, and she marked us for her prey!—France, too, had done us essential injury; but England had not only captured and condemned our ships and cargoes, but she had wantonly impressed, and was still impressing thousands of our native seamen. In vain we remonstrated; in vain we sought redress by negotiation, by the most mild and pacific policy. The just complaints of paper blockades, British orders and French decrees, were loud and increasing—our national character was suffering—our wrongs were multiplying. On the part of Britain, impressment, outrage and plunder were fast growing into an established system. With a patience unexampled, and an unabating perseverance to obtain justice and evade the threatening storm, without any partiality, without any “entangling alliance,” “without committing a single act it was unwilling the whole world should look on and be witness to,” our government struggled to rescue the drowning rights of the nation until every just and reasonable measure proved abortive, until we had, indeed, *been kick'd into a war.*

At that time, it is a humiliating reflection, but it is no less true, we had become, in the eyes of the European nations, an insulted and degraded people—we were looked upon as a nation of no spirit nor enterprize for any thing but money! They were astonished at that forbearance in our Government, which they mistook for pusillanimity. We were, in short, almost so far degenerated in their view, that in the language of the Prophet of old, the Nations were fain “to go aside to ask how we did.”

IF the hand of Napoleon was in this War, if our Government were under French Influence in this business, I have never been so fortunate as to find any person who has seen it with his own eyes, or who could tell me where it was to be seen—it is like the science of perpetual motion, much talked of, but has never yet been discovered. It was certainly just and reasonable that our Government should single out the enemy which had done us the greatest injury. At the commencement of the war, England, though deeply involved in the European contest, was here practising what she had long been before, her tyrant arts *to divide and conquer*.—It is, indeed, what cannot be disputed, that she founded her most sanguine hopes of success on our disunion; she had her spies in the bosom of our country; she found her warmest advocates in New-England. But it is with extreme reluctance that I am compelled to lift the veil of political depravity; it is indeed a superfluous task. Faction has now so fully unmasked its own projects, that it would be an insult offered to reason and common sense to recapitulate what its own extravagance has so often and so publicly exposed; I shall, therefore, be as brief as possible on this subject; neither shall I proceed to a tedious narrative of the events of the war, they are generally known—on the land they were at first disastrous and discouraging; but on the Ocean, the successful operations of the war were unexampled in the history of nations. But the great change in the affairs of Europe at length gave to England an overwhelming force of veteran troops, who were sent to reduce us to “unconditional submission.” Gorged with power and inflated with ambition, she threatened every assailable town on our sea-board with ruin and devastation. The downfall of the Bonapartean dynasty was received by the opposition party, in many places in this country, with the same triumphant exultation as it was in England, and the jubilee that was celebrated on that occasion in some of our capitals, considering the well known issue of the event, was a novel circumstance in the history of nations—it was a most singular stretch of the unnational feelings of faction. When the war was declared, it was no more than what was expected, that there would have been some opposition against it; but that there were men born on American ground, and breathing the air of Freedom, who could publicly rejoice in the disastrous events of their



country, and join the choral symphonies of old England, was what charity forbade us to believe.

I WOULD here observe, that I hate no man because he does not think with me ; but under the complicated embarrassments of the nation, I know not which most to admire, the successful progress and honorable conclusion of the war, or the unexampled lenity and firmness of our government. It was at first predicted that the war would be unpopular ; and I never heard of any prophets who labored so hard to fulfil their own predictions. With sedition in the cabinet and treason in the field—with a powerful faction in this section of the country—a faction steady to its purpose—wrangling with every measure of the Government, be it what it would—uniform in inconsistency, and systematic only in opposition—threatening a dismemberment of the Union, and seeking to establish its own importance amidst the woes of Freedom and a nation's blood—with a combination of these New-England States to withhold their aid in men and money, and a most ridiculous queering and quibbling to evade the meaning of the Constitution, at a time of the greatest peril, when the exigencies of the nation demanded the united efforts of all hearts and hands. With what kind of sounds were our ears then saluted ? Was it the voice of patriotism or the language of Americans, that resounded through our Eastern borders ? No ; it was the loud ravings of opposition, the lugubrious moans of a wily faction.

THE War ! the wicked War ! ruinous, unnecessary and unjust, was responded from the pulpit and the press—from the halls of legislation to the country bar-room—patriotism was proscribed, and national feeling almost extinguished—the social affections of the human heart seemed all gone over to the side of the enemy ; while the tenderest sympathies were excited, not for the hoary headed parent nor the murdered son—not for the mourning mother nor the bleeding infant, the guiltless victims of Indian barbarity—not for these—but for the murderers themselves, the savage wielders of the tomahawk and scalping-knife ! reeking with the blood of our western friends—with the blood of Americans ! These were the characters for which even a Governor of one of these Eastern States expressed an uncommon sympathy and regard ! At that time, the President was abused—

the army ridiculed, and the recruiting business obstructed and discouraged—the love of some seemed waxing cold—they were almost ready to give up the Republic as lost—others were afraid to vindicate the cause of their wronged and bleeding country.

BUT were it not to exhibit some of the accumulated embarrassments of the Government and of the nation, and to raise your gratitude to that ALMIGHTY BEING whose arm has again sustained the righteous cause, and amid surrounding foes and threatening dangers on every side, has given us once more to rejoice in the salvation of our country and the auspicious return of peace. Were it not for these considerations, I would gladly draw a veil over the features of that distorted era, and seal my lips in perpetual silence on the subject. Man, I know, is the creature of prejudice, and his habits are too much derived from local circumstances and accidental causes—this, no doubt, is the case with many of our well-meaning, though misguided fellow-citizens. But, that liberty is an ideal thing, and that patriotism may be always cured by the honors and emoluments of offices and distinctions, is a dogma which the feelings of all honest men ought to regret.

THAT war is a public calamity, none will deny.—The real philanthropist must ever deplore the dire necessity which compels man to lift the sword against his fellow-man; but in the present state of the world, war, though an evil, is sometimes to be expected, and is sometimes necessary for the prevention of evils of longer duration. That this war has been distressing in many places, is undoubtedly true; but that those states which have felt its distresses the least have complained the most, is as true. That there were miscalculations and mismanagements in the former Secretary at War, is what I never disputed—but that the success of the general progress and closing events of the war have far exceeded my expectations, from much reflection on the subject, I declare it to be my sincere opinion.

As a subject of the U. States and a citizen of Massachusetts, I have felt to lament the degeneracy of that once patriotic and honorable state; like a traveller contemplating the ruins of Egypt or Palmyra, I have seen the broken columns of political magnificence—the shattered

pyramids of human enterprize—the once-proud monuments of Republican glory, nodding from their lofty summits or prostrate in the dust! not from the mutilations of time, but from the vandal assaults of faction. There the cradle of patriotism has become its grave!—there, with some honorable exceptions, we have seen the spirit of the Revolution slumbering in the tombs of our ancestors or yawning in the streets of her capital—or we have witnessed its transmigrated energies pleading in her legislative halls for the rights of Britain! There the Genius of Independence has sighed its murmurs to the lonely winds! its walls have been thrown down, and its altars polluted by British priests and British spies, or deserted by an almost total apathy of national feeling and an abandonment and contempt of the Constitution and of our Republican institutions. At the very time our government was charged with French influence, the walls of her state-house resounded with the high praises of old England. British justice, British magnanimity and British religion were the general eulogies bestowed upon the enemies of our country.—While the ark of the nation was floating on the blood of the brave citizens of New-York, Ohio, Kentucky and Vermont, with many of her own patriotic bands from her eastern borders, we beheld the Assembly of Massachusetts, amidst their other preposterous acts, resolving that it was unbecoming a moral and religious people to rejoice at the victories obtained over our enemies, while it was made the discharge of a religious obligation to rejoice in the destruction of the enemies of England; when thousands of Napoleon's troops were starved or frozen to death in the icy climes of Russia. But this altered the case, for such victories they could give public thanks to the Almighty! it was the cause of England that would be benefitted, it was not the cause of our own country!

I HAVE here spoken of MASSACHUSETTS more particularly, because she has done what HENRY, her British prophet and spy foretold that she would do—she has given the tone to the New-England States—she has taken the lead against the Government of the United States—she has thrown all the weight she could into the scale of the enemy. But I have only to notice the last act of her political depravity. At the time when the Government of Great Britain made her high toned demands of the United



States as the price of an ignominious peace—at that momentous crisis, when men of all parties spurned the degrading terms, and New-England seemed almost ready to shake off the night-mare of her political infatuation—when the indignant fire of patriotism began to kindle thro' the land, and national feeling was rallying round the standard of union—then, in that unpropitious day to the drowning hopes of faction, the disgraceful project of the HARTFORD CONVENTION was first juggled into existence.—The three-headed monster was born in BOSTON, but to HARTFORD was reserved the honor of its first ludicrous exhibition ! After the public mind had been so long floating on the dark ocean of conjecture, and the eyes of the nation were impatiently looking forward to catch a glimpse at the unknown phenomenon, as men once gazed at comets and eclipses, before they knew whether to look upon them as ill-boding appearances, or harmless visitants—after religious meetings had been held in various parts of New-England, and public prayers had been put up to Heaven for success in what some believed a *pious* undertaking ! the Delegates themselves began the business, by a solemn show of Fasting and Prayer ! It is a mortifying reflection, to think any person of common understanding, could believe those men sincere in their religious devotions. I may incur the censure of some, for this plainness ; but I think the rule of judgment is plain—the gospel teaches us that we shall know them by their fruits—“ men do not gather grapes of thorns nor figs of thistles ;” and however masked their designs may be, the veil is often so thin, that those who dare look may easily see what it covers. Had the meeting of that Convention been for the purpose of adopting measures for the real good of their country, at such a time of national danger and distress—to have deprecated the judgments of the Almighty, and implored him to save our bleeding land from foreign and domestic foes, and restore to us again the blessings of peace, union and prosperity—had such been the object of their Fast, their actions, no doubt, would have been approved by Heaven, and the whole christian world might have fellowshipped their devotion.

O ! SACRED and divine Christianity ! source of every blessing and light of everlasting life, given to guide mankind through the journey of time and lead them to the

fountain of eternal love ! given to shew men the deep depravity of their own hearts, and make them honest in their actions to God and their fellow creatures. System of unshaken truth ! how often art thou perverted to serve the ambitious purposes of designing men ! how often are thine altars profaned to gloss over the dark projects of faction or to give a solemn sanction to the vilest abominations of Kings and their authorized agents ! Men are not at all times what they pretend to be. Louis the XI. of France, who, as Dr. Russel observes, lived in open violation of the principles of morality, and whose life was a jumble of crimes and contradictions, was the first who assumed and received the title of MOST CHRISTIAN MAJESTY !—And Suwarrow, styled the Great Christian General of her Christian Majesty the Empress of Russia, before he entered Warsaw, it is said he devoted a day to fasting and prayer ! and when he returned from finishing the horrid work in the dismemberment of ill-fated Poland, he kept a day of Thanksgiving, and in the temples of the Most High God ordered the *Te Deum* to be sung on the occasion ! Such monstrous pictures of hypocrisy have often glared on the pages of history, and it is enough to convince us that all is not Christianity which bears that sacred name ; “ for what is highly esteemed among men is often an abomination in the sight of God.” If such things are abhorrent to the feelings of all virtuous and benevolent minds—to the eyes of infinite purity, to him who searches all hearts and sees through all the disguises of men, such solemn mockeries must be the height of moral depravity.

As to the Hartford Convention there were many men of intelligence of Federal politics who were opposed to it. Some within the circle of my acquaintance, I speak it to their honor, have spoken of it in high terms of disapprobation, for they viewed it in the same light which all candid and enlightened men must view it. Its doings thus far have been made public and its objects are generally known. It has past by like the idle winds and it is generally believed will remain with the things *which were*, after leaving some thousand dollars for the states concerned to pay, for the expence of their sitting, and the ridiculous mission to Washington.

HAD it not been for the merciful interposition of Heaven in our behalf, instead of being privileged to as-

semble here to-day on this joyfully religious occasion, we might have been sitting in sackcloth lamenting the dire effects of a dismembered union—we might have been flying to extinguish the flames of civil discord—or while the plains of New-England were smoking with the blood of her bravest sons, we might have been compelled to bow to the dictates of a British army, while its licentious soldiery were committing those outrages and abominations which their brutal countersign promised them at Orleans. But thanks be to God, who in the midst of judgment has remembered mercy, for with a high hand and an outstretched arm hath he put down our enemies, and given us to rejoice in the salvation of our dearest rights and liberties.—The tempest of opposition has raged, but it has spent its menacing fury—the east wind has blown, but the fruits of the Revolution have not been blasted! The tree of liberty was planted too deep to be blown down by the whirlwinds of faction—Americans have been sheltered under its branches—they have long been regaled by its delicious fruits—it will re-blossom on its native soil—it will bring forth its fruits in season, for their wisdom and valor will defend it from the assaults of foreign and domestic enemies. In this war we have seen their national character supported by the most brilliant displays of heroism! In the north, the victories on the Lakes, with those of Chippewa, Erie, Bridgewater, York and Plattsburgh, have shed an imperishable lustre on the arms of the Republic, and wreathed with unfading laurels the brows of her defenders—they have humbled the kaughty spirit of our enemies and convinced the world that America unpractised in the trade of war—without allies and late without armies or officers to command them, has been and still is able to assert and defend her native rights against the most powerful nation in Europe. On the Ocean the trident seems to have departed from the once-proud mistress of the waves! There the strong arm of Jehovah has maintained the righteous cause—there the long-sleeping vengeance of insulted Americans has vanquished their astonished foes, and stamped on their distinguished flag the broad seal of independence, which has retrieved their suffering character and commanded the respect of all nations, and will probably supercede the necessity of any other pledge for the future conduct of our enemies. Should England, however, madly violate her faith and hazard another contest, which from



the lesson she has already been taught, and from the aspect of affairs in Europe, I think is not likely to take place very soon, we shall be far better prepared to meet such an emergency than we could possibly have been at the commencement of this war.

BUT amid the blaze of military fame which has shone with so bright a lustre on the American arms, though the defeat of the British at Baltimore was an important display of patriotic bravery, the battle of NEW-ORLEANS, whether we consider it as a demonstration of the most consummate skill and heroism, or behold it in a more religious light as a remarkable interposition of Divine Goodness, it knows no parallel in the history of modern ages. For one I must acknowledge that when I read the official account of that victory, when I found the vaunting conquerors of Europe defeated in one instance, if not more, by one third their number of undisciplined militia, when I considered the vast disparity of loss on the American side, I could not restrain my emotions of gratitude, I could not help believing that God was on our side! Well might the illustrious JACKSON exclaim, "Wonderful interposition of Heaven! unexampled event in the history of war! let us be grateful to the God of battles, who has directed the arrows of indignation against our invaders, while He covered with His protecting shield the brave defenders of our country."

WHAT an unpleasant contrast here recurs to my recollection, while the government of Massachusetts had enforced the principle of non-resistance and a small body of British troops had been suffered to take quiet possession of a considerable portion of the District of Maine, and all attempts to repel the invaders had been directly or indirectly opposed; with feelings of proud admiration we have beheld the brave inhabitants of the South and West rallying to the standard of their country; many of them were found braving all obstacles on the long extended march, some of five hundred and some of more than a thousand miles. To meet the invaders of their country—to guard that Thermopylæ pass, that key to the western world, they flew to arms, and they gloriously achieved the object of their enterprize. Their descendants will rejoice in the deeds of their fathers; and their children's children will listen to the patriotic songs which shall celebrate their

fame ! while the unprejudiced pen of the historian will exhibit the contrasted character of the East, and point future generations to the place where the laurels of the Revolution have been left to wither on the soil which first produced them. But, I repress my feelings—the war has now closed, and it is to be hoped that the rage of opposition will pass away like the dying murmurs of a retreating storm, which has blown over without doing the injury that was expected. I say such a state of things is to be wished ; but from present appearances and past circumstances, if the opposing spirit is not still heard to howl in the hollow winds of faction, I shall be much mistaken ; but its rage will be more harmless.

BUT we are already told that we have obtained a peace without obtaining the objects we contended for ; and consequently the peace is not honorable on our side. I would here observe, that the honorable or dishonorable terms of a peace are best known by the opinion of a third party, who are wholly disinterested in the business. We find the European nations asserting, that “ it is a Peace highly honorable to the United States ”—we find the English themselves declaring, that “ the peace with America is a peace of necessity—that making it at that moment betrayed, on the part of Britain, a deadliness to the feelings of honor, and a timidity of disposition, and that they had been compelled rather to kiss the rod than retaliate its exercises.” Again the same Editor observes, “ that the British government have attempted to force their principles upon America, and have failed, and that they have retired from the contest with the stripes yet bleeding on their backs.” Let it be observed, that this language is not from the opposition side, but from a high-toned government paper, published in London. I cannot well conceive how the English could have expressed any thing more flattering to the pride, or more honorable to the character of Americans. The treaty of peace is founded on reciprocal terms—that a commercial treaty will follow hereafter, we have good reasons to believe. The orders in council had been repealed, though unknown to our government at the commencement of the war. The peace in Europe had prevented the causes of impressment. On the news of hostilities existing between the two nations, all the impressed Americans who could gave themselves

up as prisoners of war. By the third article of the treaty, "all prisoners of war taken on either side, as well by land as by sea, are to be restored."—"The doctrine that the character of the mariner is derived from the flag has been decided by her great civilian, Sir WILLIAM SCOTT, and consequently acknowledged by England herself, however she has formerly violated the principle." Respecting the fisheries, our drying fish on the shores of the Labradore was never considered as any thing more than a matter of mere courtesy, and it is a well known fact, that but few Americans ever went to that place to dry their fish—they considered it then as they do now, a matter of no essential consequence. "As to the Calcutta trade, that was withheld from us before the war; we have certainly, then, not lost it by the war."

"THAT England has been forced to depart from her first arrogant demands" I think will not be disputed; and that she has acceded to the terms our government was willing to establish is likewise true—and that the nation has not betrayed its interests, nor the government its trust, all candid and unprejudiced men will and must acknowledge. Surely while the character of the President ranks so high, in the opinion of other nations, he is well deserving the confidence of his countrymen. He has not abandoned our rights, he has saved, and honorably supported them. If any man can believe that he entered into this war to ensure his election, I do not feel disposed to denounce him, but I pity the weakness of his understanding. He could not have acted so inconsistent a part—he could not have hazarded his own honor and popularity in a matter of so doubtful an issue and of so much importance to his country, for such an object, when he was under no necessity for such an alternative.

THERE was a time during the period of this war when a dark cloud overspread our land, it seemed the awful presage of approaching ruin! our country divided and threatened with the tremendous vengeance of a civil war—the national counsels distracted by opposite feelings—our enemies, with augmented forces on every side, spreading their vandal war along the shores of the Chesapeake and other places—plundering private property—pillaging and burning defenceless villages—insulting the living and ri-



sing even the mansions of the dead ! while exulting in the proffered reward of their disgraceful leaders, in the tears and shrieks of female innocence !—Great God ! are there Americans to be found who have advocated their cause, who have palliated their crimes ?—Tell it not to our descendants ! publish it not to the ears of a reproaching world ! In that alarming period, when the ashes of the public edifices were smoking in the streets of the Capital, and the taunting shouts of a degraded faction responded to the vain-vaporings of Britain, and even applauded a deed which an uninterested world condemned !—When the genius of America sat mourning in solitude, and Liberty stood weeping over her bleeding altars ! many of the friends of their country were almost ready to despair of the republic—but Heaven did not abandon our cause—the brave defenders of their country's rights stood forth, resolved to conquer or to mingle their last blood with her expiring liberties ! A gay beam of hope soon began to brighten through the gloom ! Victory on victory by sea and land, the most brilliant and important, gave new energy to the government, and animation to the friends of their country ; and at the moment of the greatest public triumph, when the mantle of WASHINGTON had descended on the illustrious JACKSON, we received the joyful tidings of PEACE, and it was ratified by President MADISON ! Does this prove that he did not wish for Peace, or that England would not make Peace during his administration ? Or has this war proved that the people are their own worst enemies ? Has it proved that those State Governments which have opposed the war so much, have been most saving of the people's money ?—I think not. It has proved that Americans have discomfited their enemies on every side ; that their well-tryed valor has gained an exalted name for their country ; and they will assuredly reap the honor they deserve from all nations. But while we feel an honest pride in the martial fame of our countrymen, there is one noble trait in their character, which deserves to be inscribed on walls of brass and pillars of marble—I mean their HUMANITY. It has equaled their courage—it has shone conspicuous over British dishonor and cruelty—it has descended in showers of blessings on their prisoners—it has spread the broad mantle of mercy, to comfort and relieve their fallen enemies ! whose contrasted deeds will be a lasting reproach to the British character.

THE Americans have captured, during this war, more than fifteen hundred of the enemy's merchant ships, besides three frigates and two whole squadrons on the Lakes, with many other vessels of war—while the captures of the enemy have been but few in comparison. They have already liberated from the prison ships in one single port in England, more than *two thousand impressed Americans* ! Let no man despair of the Republic ; this war has given it more stability and strength than a thirty year's peace could have done in the situation it was in before it commenced. It is the world's last hope of liberty ! the fast anchored land of a nation's rights ! It has stood the test—it has been tried as by fire ! Like a rock in the Ocean, it has braved the dashing of the nations and the howlings of the angry storm ! But HE who once spake to the raging seas, has commanded PEACE, and the billows of war and the winds of faction have obeyed HIM ! The clouds which spread over our land are dispersed—the darkness has kindled into day, and the tempest of war has subsided into the delightful calms of peace. We have now a fair prospect before us of a flourishing and happy era—our trade will again revive—our sails are already swelling to the winds of every sea—they will bear the rich products of our country abroad—they will return every article we shall need—our flag will command respect, and the brave character of our seamen will be their best protection—while the arts at home will revive, and our manufactures flourish and increase. With such prospects before us, who does not exult in the beams of peace ; who does not rejoice that the mountains of freedom have appeared in this western world ? that the dove with the olive has returned to its native ark ! Who does not feel an honest pride that he is an American ? And who, let me ask, does not feel to acknowledge that the arm of the ALMIGHTY has been our salvation ? that Heaven has hitherto distinguished our land for the peculiar displays of its goodness, and for the last abode of persecuted liberty ! And, though after so long a season of peace, we have again been suffered to feel the common calamities of war, let us remember, that as a nation, we have often deserved the judgments of the Almighty. While other nations were suffering the complicated distresses of war and famine, and Europe seemed a slaughter-house for the destruction of mankind, we, blest with peace and surrounded with plenty, what was our sense of gratitude ? We murmured at the gifts of peace—we complained because we were too full-fed—we found fault with our rulers without any just grounds—we regretted the blessing of liberty—we calognized tyrants—and many suffered their avarice to defeat the measures of the best Government on earth, and were ready to sacrifice their country for the pride of office or the lust of gain. Such were our transgressions ; and we have felt the chastisements of the Almighty in a just and necessary war. Let us now rejoice that HE has given us no longer to hear the sound of the trumpet, nor see the garment rolled in blood ! For through the clouds of His judgment His mercy has beamed with a resplendent lustre—our country is saved and our liberties secure.

To HIM, whose Omnipotent arm poises the scale of Empires and guides the destinies of nations—who puts down and builds up at His pleasure—to HIS NAME be all the PRAISE.























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